

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

PITTS, Joseph R. (Republican)
Representative, 16th District, Pennsylvania
Elected 1996 to 105th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congress



BACKGROUND

Born: Lexington, Kentucky - 10 October 1939

Home: Kennet Square, Pennsylvania

Marital Status: Married (Virginia) - 3 children

Religion: Protestant

Education: Asbury College, AB, 1961; West Chester Univ, Med, 1972

Military: US Air Force, 1963-69; Captain, B-52 nav/EWO, 116 combat missions in Vietnam War

Profession: Nursery owner; teacher

Political: Pennsylvania House, 1976-96. Defeated James G. Blaine (D) in 1996 general election with 59 percent of the vote. Reelected in 1998 with 55% of the vote and in 2000 with 67%.

Rep Pitts, is a conservative who promotes a pro-business, smaller government philosophy, believes in tax reform and has been a staunch foe of abortion.

In the 106th Congress, was appointed to Armed Services Cmte. Expressed concern that the UN may decide not to hold the referendum for self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. Believed the situation in the Mideast was taking attention away from other areas, such as Sudan, where there is extreme violence. Also expressed concern regarding the refugees who suffer as a result of the dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan. Addressing the current state of military readiness, complained that the Administration has reduced spending for national defense while sending troops on more and more deployments. Cited a 1999 purchase of \$40B worth of overseas communications equipment that cannot be used as an example that waste in government far exceeds a proposed 1% across-the-board cut. Believed pilot retention reforms were essential to the best Air Force in the world. Recalled his experience as a B-52 navigator. Discussed security breaches at Los Alamos National Laboratory, emphasizing the importance the Founding Fathers placed on national security in the Constitution. Expressed concern about human rights in Russia and terrorism emanating from Iran. Provided additional views in the report on the FY 01 DoD Authorization bill regarding electronic warfare.

In the 107th Congress, commented on the April 2001 collision of a US Navy plane and a Chinese fighter jet which caused the American plane to make an emergency landing. Noted that the Chinese were holding very sensitive American technology. Stated that causing the collision and holding the plane and its crew are flagrant violations of international agreements; wondered what other agreements the Chinese would violate. Asked for an apology from China's President for the forceful behavior on the part of the F-8 pilots. Appointed to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Cosponsored H.R. 931, the Sudan Peace Act. Commended foreign service officers working in US embassies abroad and at the State Dept. Supported the President's proposed tax cut. Pressured DoD to improve inadequate radio and radar-jamming capabilities.

Additional: Co-Chairman and charter member of Air Force Caucus. Co-chmn of the House Electronic Warfare Working Group

AF Bases: None

COMMITTEES

ENERGY AND COMMERCE

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS